

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 IO-10

USIE-00 SAM-01 SAB-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-10 AID-05 OMB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /090 W
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6361

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 2358

STATE PASS AMB KEATING

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SUBJECT: RABIN'S MAARIV INTERVIEW: US/ISRAELI RELATIONS AND
NEGOTIATING PROSPECTS

REF: FBIS TA181450

1. SUMMARY: PRIMIN RABIN IN EXTENSIVE MAARIV
INTERVIEW APRIL 18 OUTLINED HIS CURRENT VIEWS ON ISRAELI
POLICY TOWARDS US DURING REASSESSMENT PHASE AND
DESCRIBED ISRAELI PRECODNTIONS FOR RESUMPTION OF NEGO-
TIATIONS. PARADOXICALLY, THOUGH RABIN REGARDED EGYPTIAN
OBJECTIVE AS BEING TO REGAIN TERRITORY AND ACHIEVE
PALESTINIAN STATE WITHOUT GIVING POLITICAL QUID-PRO-QUO,
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HE NONETHELESS EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN POSSIBILITY OF RE-
VIVING NEGOTIATING MOMENTUM. HE BELIEVED THAT NEXT STEP
COULD BE EFFORTS TOWARD INTERIM GOE/GOI SETTLEMENT AFTER
RECONVENING AND WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF GENEVA CONF.

RABIN ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT GOE HAS NOT GIVEN UP MILITARY OPTION. COMMENTS IN INTERVIEW UNDERSCORE GOI INTENTION AT PRESENT NOT TO COME UP WITH NEW IDEAS FOR RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS, BUT INSTEAD TO ALLOW INTERVAL FOR COOLING OF TENSIONS IN US ISRAELI RELATIONSHIP. END SUMMARY.

2. US ISRAELI RELATIONS: TWO PRONGED POLICY. RABIN SAID ISRAEL'S TWO TASKS IN US ARE TO CONDUCT DETAILED FULL-FLEDGED INFO CAMPAIGN AND SIMULTANEOUSLY TO MATINATIN AND/OR RESTORE RELATIONS WITH PRINCIPAL PERSONALITIES IN ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS AS THEY WERE BEFORE SUSPENSION OF NEGOTIATIONS. RABIN CALLED FOR COOLING OFF PERIOD "TO SMOOTH OUT ROUGH EDGES" IN US/ISRAELI RELATIONS, DESCRIBING THIS AS PRECONDITION FOR RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATING PROCESS. (WE NOTE THAT, ACCORDING TO APRIL 21 NEW YORK TIMES, ISRAEL HAS DECIDED NOT TO COME UP WITH NEW POLITICAL IDEAS FOR NEGOTIATIONS UNTIL USG DECIDES TO CONTINUE ARMS SUPPLY POLICY, PARTICULARLY TO FULFILL GOI REQUESTS FOR F-15 AND LANCE MISSILES.)

3. US MIDEAST POLICY REASSESSMENT: RABIN SAID THAT OUTCOME OF REASSESSMENT " WILL TO A GREAT EXTENT BE DETERMINED BY OUR STAND, OUR SUCCESS IN THE TWO-LEVEL CONTEST WITH PUBLIC OPINION AND WITH MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE CONGRESS... OUR STAND WILL HAVE A DECISIVE INFLUENCE." RABIN ADDED THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES IN US POLICY, AND EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT US AID TO ISRAEL IN ITS PRINCIPAL MILITARY AND FINANCIAL COMPONENTS WOULD CONTINUE AS IN PAST.

4. MILITARY RESUPPLY: RABIN NOTED " ONE MUST DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN ARMS FOR WHICH SUPPLY CONTRACTS HAVE BEEN SIGNED-- THESE ARE ARRIVING REGULARLY AND I AM CONVINCED THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO ARRIVE-- AND THE SUSPENSION OF SIGNING OF CONTRACTS FOR ADDITIONAL ARMS UNTIL THE REASSESSMENT HAS BEEN COMPLETED." RABIN WARNED ISRAELIS NOT TO BECOME ENTANGLED IN ILLUSION THAT ISRAEL, FACED WITH SOVIET RESUPPLY UNCLASSIFIED

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OF ARAB STATES, COULD FREE ITSELF IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE FROM DEPENDENCE ON US ASSISTANCE. IDF REQUIREMENTS ARE FILLED BY 60-70 PERCENT FROM FOREIGN , MAINLY US SOURCES.

5. EGYPTIAN POLICY OBJECTIVES: RABIN SAID THAT SADAT'S BASIC CONCEPTION HAS BEEN AND REMAINS ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO PRE-1967 LINES AND ESTABLISHMENT OF "ARAFAT STATE" IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA (WEST BANK) AND GAZA STRIP WITHOUT GIVING REAL PEACE IN RETURN. UP TO 1973 SADAT CONCENTRATED ON ATTAINING THIS OBJECTIVE BY MILITARY MEANS AND HE HAS NOT FORESWORN THIS OPTION. HOWEVER, SINCE OCTOBER WAR AND SUBSEQUENT US/GOE RAPPROCHEMENT, HE HAD HOPED THAT US WOULD ATTAIN THESE OBJECTIVES FOR HIM BY POLITICAL PRESSURE

ON ISRAEL. RABIN SAID THAT SADAT'S EXPECTATIONS IN THIS REGARD WERE RAISED BY US DECISION TO RESCUE EGYPTIAN THIRD ARMY. SADAT KNEW THAT "THE SOVIET UNION WAS INCAPABLE OF SAVING THE THIRD ARMY. THIS WAS DONE BY THE U.S." WHILE DENYING THAT US RELATIONS WITH EGYPT ARE NOW BASED ON CLOSER IDENTITY OF INTERESTS THAN ITS TIES WITH ISRAEL, HE ADDED THAT DANGER EXISTED OF AMERICAN ILLUSION THAT SADAT " WILL INDEED CHANGE HIS CHARACTER SUBSTANTIALLY." MOREOVER, WHILE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT IMPORTANCE TO USG OF CLOSER RELATIONS WITH EGYPT, " ISRAEL CANNOT GIVE UP ITS VITAL POSITIONS FOR THIS GOAL." IT WILL HAVE TO CONSIDER ITS MOVES AND POSITIONS " ACCORDING TO ITS OWN SOVEREIGN INTERESTS."

6. ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT: THE CANAL ISSUE. RABIN SAID THAT ISRAEL HAD RECEIVED EXPLICIT PLEDGE FROM EGYPT, IN (1974) DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT, THAT WHEN SUEZ CANAL WAS OPENED TRANSIT OF GOODS TO AND FROM ISRAEL WOULD BE ALLOWED. HE ADDED THAT HE WOULD NOT DISCLOSE EXACT PHRASEOLOGY.

7. NEGOTIATING PROSPECTS. RABIN EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT USG WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK NEW INITIATIVES FOR MOVING TOWARDS NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENTS. NOTING THAT NEITHER ISRAEL NOR EGYPT HAD CHANGED ITS NEGOTIATING POSITIONS (ISRAEL HAS CLEAR CONSCIENCE THAT IT HAD SHOWED MAXIMUM READINESS TO REACH AGREEMENT), RABIN UNCLASSIFIED

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SAID THAT AFTER WAITING PERIOD DEDICATED TO RESTORING US/ ISRAELI RELATIONS, WAY TO AN INTERIM SETTLEMENT MAY BE POSSIBLE THROUGH RECONVENING OF GENEVA CONF. NEW ROUND OF ISRAELI/EGYPTIAN TALKS LOOKING TOWARDS INTERIM SETTLEMENT COULD GET UNDERWAY IN FRAMWORK OF CONF, PROVIDED IT IS WELL PREPARED. REVIEWING ISRAEL'S THREE NEGOTIATING PROPOSALS, RABIN INDICATED THAT IN RETURN FOR NON-BELLIGERENCY AGREEMENT ISRAEL REMAINED PREPARED TO CONSIDER DEEP WITHDRAWAL IN SINAI (ACTUAL LINES WOULD BE MATTER FOR NEGOTIATIONS).

8. SOVIET/ISRAELI RELATIONS. RABIN REFUSED TO CONFIRM OR DENY PRESS REPORTS OF RECENT MEETING WITH SOVIET EMISSARIES, ADDING THAT PUBLICATION ITSELF HARMS CHANCE OF ESTABLISHING SUCH CONTACTS. SUBSTANTIVELY, HE NOTED, THERE HAD BEEN NO CHANGE WHATSOEVER IN SOVIET MIDEAST POLICY, EITHER AS TO NATURE OF ITS PROPOSED SOLUTION TO ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE OR ITS PREFERRED METHOD. ASKED WHETHER USG ENCOURAGED ISRAELI-SOVIET CONTACTS, RABIN REPLIED THAT MAIN CONSIDERATION IN EFFORTS TO FOSTER SUCH CONTACTS WAS ISRAELI ONE AND "EVERYTHING IS GEARED TO THIS CONSIDERATION."

9. DOMESTIC POLITICS-- AN EMERGING NATIONAL CONSENSUS. RABIN, DECLINING TO COMMENT DIRECTLY ON WHETHER GOI'S STAND HAD STRENGTHENED HIS DOMESTIC POSITION AND PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN HIM PERSONALLY, NOTED THAT ATMOSPHERE OF GREATER UNITY HAS DEVELOPED AFTER SUSPENSION OF NEGOTIATIONS. THERE HAS BEEN A CERTAIN SOBERING IN PUBLIC OPINION, WITH PEOPLE ASKING 'WHAT COMES NEXT.' SHARPNESS OF EXTREMIST APPROACHES, FROM BOTH LEFT AND RIGHT, HAS EASED AS RESULT OF GOI'S EFFORT TO REACH AN AGREEMENT. SOME SECTIONS OF ISRAELI PUBLIC OPINION HAD OBJECTED TO GOI'S READINESS TO MAKE "FAR-REACHING CONCESSIONS." HOWEVER SINCE EGYPTIAN DEMANDS WERE UNACCEPTABLE, THERE WAS BROAD SATISFACTION WITH GOI'S ABILITY TO STAND FIRM. ISRAEL DID NOT MISS OPPORTUNITY TO REACH A SETTLEMENT, IT HAD PRESENTED DETAILED PLAN WITH FLEXIBILITY AND PLENTY OF GOOD-WILL-- "BUT ALSO AN EXPLICIT LIMIT, BEYOND WHICH NO DEVIATION IS POSSIBLE."

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